

# **FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

## **Strategic Plan 2009-2014**



## Message from the Chairman

It is my great pleasure to introduce the Federal Communications Commission's Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2009 to 2014. This document was prepared in accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and outlines the Commission's mission and strategic goals for the next five years.

In accordance with the requirements of OMB Circular A-11, the Strategic Plan contains:

- An overarching mission statement;
- General goals and objectives defining how the Commission will fulfill major segments of its mission;
- A description of the means and strategies that will be used to achieve the general goals and objectives;
- A description of the relationship between performance goals in the annual performance budget and the strategic goal framework;
- Identification of key factors that could affect achievement of the general goals and objectives; and
- A description of program evaluations used in preparing the Strategic Plan and a discussion of future evaluation activities.

I look forward to working closely with Congress, consumers, and the communications industry as the Commission implements its plan. We are experiencing a unique time for the Commission. Communications technologies are moving from an analog to a digital world, competition is increasing in the communications marketplace, and the convergence of telecommunications services is becoming a reality. I believe the strategy outlined in this plan will allow the Commission to address these and other challenges in the years to come.

Kevin J. Martin  
Chairman

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## Mission

As specified in section one of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (the Communications Act) the mission of the Federal Communications Commission is to “make available, so far as possible, to all the people of the United States, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex, rapid, efficient, Nation-wide and world-wide wire and radio communication service with adequate facilities at reasonable charges.”<sup>1</sup> In addition, section one provides that the Commission was created “for the purpose of the national defense” and “for the purpose of promoting safety of life and property through the use of wire and radio communications.”<sup>2</sup>

## About the Federal Communications Commission

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) is an independent federal agency directly responsible to Congress. The FCC is charged with regulating interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable.

The FCC is directed by five Commissioners appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for five-year terms. The President designates one of the Commissioners to serve as Chairman. The Chairman and other Commissioners oversee FCC activities, delegating selected responsibilities to seven bureaus and ten staff offices.

The Commission staff is organized by function. The Bureaus’ responsibilities include: processing applications for licenses and other filings; analyzing complaints; conducting investigations; developing and implementing regulatory policies; and taking part in hearings. Bureaus and Offices regularly work together and share expertise in addressing issues before the Commission. The Bureaus and Offices can be briefly described as follows:

- Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau - educates and informs consumers about telecommunications goods and services and engages their input to help guide the work of the Commission. CGB coordinates telecommunications policy efforts with industry and with other governmental agencies -- federal, tribal, state, and local -- in serving the public interest.
- Enforcement Bureau - enforces the Communications Act, as well as the Commission’s rules, orders, and terms and conditions of station authorizations.
- International Bureau - represents the Commission in satellite and international matters.
- Media Bureau - develops, recommends, and administers the policy and licensing programs relating to electronic media, including cable television, broadcast television, and radio in the United States and its territories. The Media Bureau also handles post-licensing matters regarding Direct Broadcast Satellite Service.
- Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau – responsible for all Commission activities pertaining to public safety, homeland security, national security, emergency management and preparedness, disaster management, communications infrastructure security and reliability, and other related issues.

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<sup>1</sup> 47 U.S.C. § 151.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

- Wireless Telecommunications Bureau – responsible for all FCC domestic wireless telecommunications programs and policies, except those involving satellite, public safety communications, or broadcasting. Wireless communications include cellular, paging, broadband PCS, advanced wireless services, 700 MHz, broadband radio service/educational broadband service, microwave, amateur radio, and air-ground radiotelephone service.
- Wireline Competition Bureau - responsible for rules and policies concerning telephone companies that provide interstate, and under certain circumstances intrastate, telecommunications services to the public through the use of wire-based transmission facilities.
- Office of Administrative Law Judges - presides over hearings and issues Initial Decisions.
- Office of Communications Business Opportunities - provides advice to the Commission on issues and policies concerning opportunities for ownership by small, minority, and women-owned communications businesses.
- Office of Engineering and Technology - allocates spectrum for non-federal use and provides expert advice on technical issues before the Commission.
- Office of the General Counsel - serves as chief legal advisor to the Commission and to its various Bureaus and Offices.
- Office of Inspector General - conducts and supervises audits and investigations relating to the programs and operations of the Commission.
- Office of Legislative Affairs - serves as the Commission's main point of contact with Congress.
- Office of the Managing Director - functions as a chief operating official, serving under the direction and supervision of the Chairman. The Managing Director oversees the Office of the Secretary which receives and distributes documents filed by the public through electronic and paper filing systems and publishes Commission decisions.
- Office of Media Relations - informs the news media of FCC decisions and serves as the Commission's main point of contact with the media.
- Office of Strategic Planning & Policy Analysis - works with the Chairman, Commissioners, and Bureaus and Offices to develop strategic plans identifying short and long term policy goals for the Commission.
- Office of Workplace Diversity - advises the Commission on all issues related to workforce diversity, affirmative recruitment, and equal employment opportunity.

## Strategic Goals

The FCC is responsible to Congress and the American people for ensuring that an orderly framework exists within which communications products and services can be quickly and reasonably provided to consumers and businesses. Equally important, the FCC must also address the communications aspects of public safety, health, and emergency operations; ensure the universal availability of basic telecommunications service; make communications services accessible to all people; and protect and inform consumers about their rights. The FCC, in accordance with its statutory authority and in support of its mission, has established six strategic goals. They are:

### **BROADBAND**

*All Americans should have affordable access to robust and reliable broadband products and services. Regulatory policies must promote technological neutrality, competition, investment, and innovation to ensure that broadband service providers have sufficient incentive to develop and offer such products and services.*

### **COMPETITION**

*Competition in the provision of communications services, both domestically and overseas, supports the Nation's economy. The competitive framework for communications services should foster innovation and offer consumers reliable, meaningful choice in affordable services.*

### **SPECTRUM**

*Efficient and effective use of non-federal spectrum domestically and internationally promotes the growth and rapid deployment of innovative and efficient communications technologies and services.*

### **MEDIA**

*The Nation's media regulations must promote competition, diversity and localism, and facilitate the transition to digital modes of delivery.*

### **PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY**

*Communications during emergencies and crises must be available for public safety, health, defense, and emergency personnel, as well as all consumers in need. The Nation's critical communications infrastructure must be reliable, interoperable, redundant, and rapidly restorable.*

### **MODERNIZE THE FCC**

*The FCC shall strive to be a highly productive, adaptive, and innovative organization that maximizes the benefit to stakeholders, staff, and management from effective systems, processes, resources, and organizational culture.*

In carrying out its six strategic goals, the FCC has identified performance goals associated with each strategic goal (see page 20 of this document). Commission management annually develops targets and measures related to each performance goal to provide direction toward accomplishing those goals. Targets and measures are published in the FCC's Performance Plan, submitted with the Commission's annual budget request to Congress. Results of the Commission's efforts to meet its goals, targets and measures are found in the Program Performance section of each fiscal year's Performance and Accountability Report.

The Sections that follow provide the overall objectives for each of the strategic goals. In addition, the means and strategies for achieving these goals and objectives are outlined. Finally, key factors external to the FCC and beyond its control are identified for each goal. These key factors can significantly affect the FCC's achievement of its general goals.

## Goal: Broadband

***Vision:** All Americans should have affordable access to robust and reliable broadband products and services. Regulatory policies must promote technological neutrality, competition, investment, and innovation to ensure that broadband service providers have sufficient incentive to develop and offer such products and services*

**Objective 1: The Commission shall promote the availability of broadband to all Americans.**

Broadband empowers by providing increased access to information and applications, and increasingly affordable means to communicate within communities and around the world. The Commission shall continue to encourage and promote broadband development, deployment, and availability, particularly to those in rural, low-income, or underserved areas and to persons with disabilities. The Commission shall seek to understand demand for and supply of broadband and to encourage deployment across multiple platforms to ensure that access is not a barrier to adoption of affordable broadband technologies as they become available. The Commission shall also foster the availability of broadband services to the public safety community. To meet this objective, the Commission shall work in partnership with state, local, and tribal governments; consumer groups; and industry.

**Objective 2: The Commission shall define broadband in a technologically neutral fashion that includes any platform capable of transmitting high-bandwidth intensive services, applications, and content.**

The definition of broadband shall encompass any advanced telecommunications capability and advanced services without regard to how such capability or services are provided. Thus, it shall include wireline and wireless, licensed and unlicensed, and terrestrial and satellite services and facilities. It should be flexible enough to include future, next-generation high-speed offerings that may not be in use today, thus taking into account the continually evolving nature of broadband technology.

**Objective 3: The Commission shall ensure harmonized regulatory treatment of competing broadband services.**

Robust competition among broadband technologies is key to the further development and maturation of the advanced services marketplace. The traditional categories of telecommunications and information services and providers, and the disparate methods of regulating them, may no longer be appropriate. The Commission shall ensure harmonized regulatory treatment of broadband access services across platforms. At the same time, the Commission shall ensure that its regulatory approach does not promote one technology over another.

**Objective 4: The Commission shall encourage and facilitate an environment that stimulates investment and innovation in broadband technologies and services.**

Increased public demand for faster, more robust broadband services shall stimulate investment and innovation. The establishment of policies that reward innovation and investment in facilities and infrastructure shall lead to further deployment of new advanced telecommunications capability. The Commission must strive to achieve a balance between providing incentives to invest in and develop



broadband technologies and applications, and maintaining competitive entry and access requirements. The Commission must be diligent in enforcing any necessary market-opening regulations to ensure that all Americans have access to high quality, affordable broadband service, while at the same time refraining from any unnecessary regulation.

***Objective 5: The Commission shall continue to monitor the deployment of advanced telecommunications capability in order to provide ongoing national and international policy leadership and consumer education in the emerging broadband arena.***

Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires the Commission to encourage deployment of advanced telecommunications capability. To implement this requirement, the Commission has undertaken regular inquiries to determine whether such capability is being deployed to all Americans on a reasonable and timely basis and to take action, if necessary, to accelerate broadband deployment. The effective monitoring of developments in domestic and international broadband deployment is critical to the Commission's ability to provide policy leadership to federal, state, local and tribal governments within the United States, as well as other nations, and to inform consumers about the availability of and advantages of adopting broadband technologies through outreach and education. By studying and understanding what drives broadband adoption in this and other countries, and through participation in international fora, the Commission will be better able to facilitate broadband deployment in this country.

***Additional Means and Strategies:***

The Commission must employ rigorous, effective policy analysis, innovative rulemaking, and sound economic decision-making in addressing policies regarding broadband deployment. Furthermore, working in partnership with state, local, and tribal governments, the Commission must facilitate discussions among key groups of constituents, including industry and consumer groups, to identify and establish best practices.

***Factors Affecting the Achievement of This Goal:***

*Technological:* Despite significant recent developments, broadband infrastructure is not yet universally deployed, particularly in rural areas. Some platforms are not suitable for deployment in certain areas of the country due to physical impediments. As broadband infrastructure continues to develop, it appears that an increasing number of traditional telecommunications services will migrate to broadband platforms.

*Economic:* From the consumer's perspective, the retail price of broadband services relative to other services such as dial-up Internet access has impacted adoption decisions, despite the availability of packages offering bundled broadband and other services. Some service providers argue that regulatory requirements increase their costs and reduce their incentive to invest in broadband, placing them at an economic, and thus competitive, disadvantage. Of particular concern are those consumers in sparsely populated areas and specialized demographic groups such as minorities and the disabled community.

*Legal:* The Commission is in the midst of several proceedings regarding the appropriate regulation of broadband services. Changes to legislation and decisions on pending court cases addressing broadband regulation may affect such regulations, as well.

*Organizational:* The appropriate policy and regulatory roles for the Commission in the emerging broadband market must be universally and clearly understood throughout the Agency.

## Goal: Competition

***Vision:** Competition in the provision of communications services, both domestically and overseas, supports the Nation's economy. The competitive framework for communications services should foster innovation and offer consumers reliable, meaningful choice in affordable services.*

**Objective 1: The Commission shall foster sustainable competition across the entire communications sector.**

The Commission shall implement and enforce policies that ensure that U.S. consumers benefit from competition in domestic and global services. Domestically, the Commission shall implement rules and policies that promote open and competitive entry by communications service providers and place primary reliance on market forces to stimulate competition, technical innovation, and development of new services for the benefit of consumers. The Commission shall seek to establish a consistent and transparent regulatory framework across all communications platforms (*e.g.*, wireline, wireless, satellite, cable) to encourage both intra-modal and inter-modal competition. The Commission shall continue to engage consumers through its outreach and education initiatives to facilitate informed choice in the competitive communications marketplace. To ensure that U.S. consumers benefit from pro-competitive policies worldwide, the Commission shall promote pro-competitive policies in discussions with regulators from other countries, when participating on U.S. government delegations, and when supporting other U.S. agencies as they negotiate international agreements that affect telecommunications. The Commission, in conformance with existing laws and policies, shall identify and eliminate market entry barriers for small entities.

**Objective 2: The Commission shall promote and advance universal service domestically, universal access internationally, and access to people with disabilities worldwide.**

The Commission shall promote universal access to communications services by promoting competition and encouraging the deployment of efficient communications technologies. The Commission shall ensure that consumers in all regions of the Nation, including rural, insular, and high cost areas, have access to telecommunications and information services at rates “reasonably comparable” to rates for similar services in urban areas. The Commission shall work to ensure efficient and effective management of the Universal Service Fund to provide high-cost, low-income, schools, libraries, and rural health care with support and to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. The Commission shall ensure that disbursements from the fund are used by recipients for appropriate purposes. In addition, the Commission shall work with industry, other U.S. government agencies, and the states to ensure that access to telecommunications services and technologies are accessible to persons with disabilities in conformance with existing laws and policies. The Commission shall engage in regulator-to-regulator discussions and work with other U.S. government agencies through appropriate international fora to promote universal access and access for people with disabilities globally.

### ***Additional Means and Strategies:***

The Commission shall continue to collect and evaluate information on competition in the domestic and international communications markets. Commission staff shall continually review the Commission's rules to determine what rules need to be implemented, revised, or eliminated to achieve competition

objectives effectively and efficiently. The Commission shall take appropriate enforcement action to ensure compliance with the competitive provisions of the Communications Act and the Commission's rules. The Commission shall continue to monitor trends in consumer complaints and coordinate with state and other federal agencies in an effort to identify marketplace practices that negatively affect competition. In addition to coordinating efforts described above, the Commission shall seek input from industry, governmental agencies, and the public concerning issues relevant to competition. In coordination with other U.S. government agencies, the Commission shall work with regulators from other countries to promote pro-competitive policies and safeguard U.S. consumers from anti-competitive practices.

***Factors Affecting the Achievement of This Goal:***

*Technological:* New technologies are challenging existing regulatory structures domestically and internationally, while enabling consumers to have access to more services than ever before. For example, traditional providers of one type of service are increasingly entering new markets by offering voice, video, and broadband data services that have the potential to compete with incumbent providers of such services. Mobility and personalization are major trends in communications technology today. Both are dependent on wireless growth and innovation, as well as ease of interconnection with traditional networks. Moreover, technological advances are making it possible to share spectrum more intensively.

*Legal:* Changes to legislation and decisions on pending court cases may affect Commission action in this area. Legal issues related to spectrum rights continue to be contested.

*Organizational:* The Commission must conduct effective policy analysis and innovative rulemakings, adopt sound economic decision-making based on access to current and relevant data in developing competition policies and rules, and take enforcement action where necessary. The Commission must consult with industry and maintain ongoing relationships with regulators across the country and throughout the world. The Commission must provide expert guidance to other U.S. government agencies regarding communications policy. In order to fulfill its competition goals, the Commission must continue to recruit or appropriately redeploy, and retain talented attorneys, engineers, and economists, and it must implement a robust training program to maintain proficiency among its professional staff.

## Goal: Spectrum

**Vision:** *The Commission must facilitate efficient and effective use of non-federal spectrum domestically and internationally to promote the growth and rapid deployment of innovative and efficient communications technologies and services.*

**Objective 1: The Commission shall develop, advocate, and implement flexible, market-oriented spectrum allocation and assignment policies.**

The Commission's allocation and assignment of spectrum must continue to evolve towards more flexible, market-oriented approaches to increase the opportunity for technologically innovative and efficient spectrum use and to ensure adequate spectrum is available for commercial, public safety, and other purposes. The Commission shall conduct rulemaking proceedings to enable new communications services and more flexible operations within existing services, where possible, and to ensure that public safety users have adequate spectrum. The Commission shall also evaluate and refine, where necessary, its spectrum assignment policies and procedures, including but not limited to its auction processes. The Commission shall work with other regulators around the world to promote the importance and benefits of implementing market-oriented spectrum reforms. The Commission shall also work with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the Department of State to develop proposals for reforming the processes and policies of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) so that international spectrum allocations can be updated on a more timely and flexible basis.

**Objective 2: The Commission shall develop policies that promote efficient and effective use of spectrum.**

The Commission, through its rulemaking proceedings, shall take steps to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of spectrum use. These steps may include, for example, (1) accommodating shared use of spectrum by compatible users; (2) exploring new and innovative licensing models that reduce entry barriers; (3) fostering interoperability for public safety communications; (4) minimizing harmful interference; and (5) encouraging the development of new technologies, such as software defined radio, cognitive radio, dynamic frequency selection, and new protocols (*e.g.*, Internet Protocol based). The Commission shall work with regulators outside the U.S. to determine steps that may be needed, either on a global, regional, or bi-lateral basis to encourage more efficient spectrum use.

**Objective 3: The Commission shall conduct effective and timely licensing activities, relying on advanced electronic filing and electronic information access systems.**

The Commission shall encourage and, when appropriate, require electronic filing of license and other applications involving spectrum. The Commission shall also update and improve its electronic filing and electronic information access systems, as necessary, to streamline and harmonize its licensing and coordination processes. Applications that are filed electronically can be processed more quickly, relying more on computer automation and to a lesser extent on staff resources, which often are challenged with multiple competing priorities. Such disposition of license applications allows communications service providers to gain access to spectrum expeditiously so that they are able to deploy service to American consumers more rapidly. The Commission shall ensure that its website continues to provide the public with the best and most up-to-date information on existing licenses, pending applications, and licensing

procedures. In addition, the Commission shall work with NTIA, the ITU, Canada, and Mexico to explore ways to improve the sharing of electronic information and the coordination and approval of pending applications.

***Objective 4: The Commission shall develop and implement policies that delineate the rights and responsibilities of both licensed and unlicensed spectrum users, particularly with respect to harmful interference.***

The Commission shall, where possible, provide for increased sharing of spectrum between services with similar technical requirements, while ensuring that highly sensitive services (*e.g.*, public safety) are protected from harmful interference. The Commission shall work, through its rulemaking and other proceedings, to delineate the rights and responsibilities of spectrum users so that: 1) the potential for harmful interference can be minimized, especially for public safety communications; and 2) opportunities for new spectrum uses, including both licensed and unlicensed systems and facilities, can be explored. The Commission shall work closely with NTIA, as well as regulators in Mexico, Canada, and other countries, to identify and resolve instances of harmful interference on an international basis and to avoid harmful interference in the future.

***Objective 5: The Commission shall vigorously enforce its spectrum regulations and policies.***

The Commission shall vigorously enforce its spectrum regulations and policies to provide certainty to spectrum users that they will not be subject to harmful interference by the use of devices that do not comply with the Commission's technical rules. The Commission shall also vigorously enforce its licensing requirements, including, for example, enforcing EAS rules, enforcing limitations on power output, antenna and tower height, E-911 requirements, and build out requirements, to ensure that licensees are using spectrum efficiently and effectively. In addition, the Commission shall prevent unauthorized use of spectrum through enforcement action.

***Objective 6: The Commission shall serve as a dependable information source for Congress, spectrum users, and regulators around the world on the complex issues inherent in using our spectrum resources.***

The Commission, as appropriate and upon request, shall provide Congress and the Executive Branch with timely and professional advice and information concerning efficient and effective spectrum utilization. The Commission shall publish public notices regarding spectrum issues, keep its spectrum-related web pages current, and conduct conferences regarding auctions and other spectrum matters, so that spectrum users and other consumers have access to licensing and technical information. The Commission shall actively participate in the work of the international bodies that deal with spectrum issues, providing our expertise, knowledge, and recommended approaches to complex spectrum issues.

#### ***Additional Means and Strategies:***

Commission personnel shall gain technical knowledge of new technologies that impact spectrum use. In addition to the coordinating activities above, the Commission shall lead discussions with industry, government agencies, and the public concerning spectrum issues.

***Factors Affecting the Achievement of This Goal:***

*Technological:* Explosive growth in new technologies -- particularly handheld and wireless devices -- has driven demand for new spectrum allocations. Increasing demand for spectrum requires new and innovative management techniques to allocate, assign, and use spectrum more efficiently and effectively. Methods for avoiding and mitigating harmful interference, and increasing opportunities for spectrum sharing and re-use, require further study.

*Economic:* The competing demands for spectrum require trade-offs between users, including commercial, public safety, and homeland security. Where spectrum relocation is desirable, crafting economic incentives for incumbent spectrum users to relocate continues to be challenging.

*Legal:* Legislation could impact the FCC's spectrum management policies. Jurisdictional issues between the agencies charged with spectrum management (in particular NTIA and FCC) and competing demands might lead to new ways to achieve more efficient spectrum management. Differences among international and domestic spectrum allocation policies may lead to disparity and inconsistency among U.S. and foreign licensing processes.

*Organizational:* The FCC requires substantial investment in human capital to maintain its expertise and needs to upgrade and replace technical equipment to appropriately deal with spectrum issues and enforce its rules regarding interference and other technical requirements. The Commission must maintain an experienced, educated, and knowledgeable technical, legal, and economic staff that is able to keep pace with technological developments and trends, and promote the implementation of new spectrum management techniques and policies.

## Goal: Media

***Vision:** The Nation's media regulations must promote competition, diversity and localism, and facilitate the transition to digital modes of delivery.*

**Objective 1: The Commission shall develop media rules and policies that achieve statutory policy objectives in light of significant changes to traditional media services.**

Increased competition, changing ownership patterns, converging markets and industries, and deployment of new technologies have challenged both the legal and economic foundations of the Commission's media regulation. The Commission shall examine current rules and make changes as required to accommodate the policy goals of competition, diversity, and localism within the evolving media landscape. The Commission shall review its closed captioning and access to emergency information rules to determine whether the existing rules are adequately serving the needs of individuals with disabilities, and as the digital transition is completed, whether the applicable rules continue to do so.

**Objective 2: The Commission shall encourage the timely development and deployment of digital services.**

The Commission shall continue to provide strong leadership in the transition to digital television and radio, adopting, defending, and enforcing regulations that expeditiously advance the digital transition. In collaboration with industry, consumers, and regulators, the Commission shall seek innovative ways to facilitate the digital transition and bring new services to consumers. The Commission shall support industry resolution of technical issues. The Commission shall review technical rules and resolve and enforce operational issues of media service providers in a timely manner. The Commission shall actively promote the development of television and radio standards in international fora.

**Objective 3: The Commission shall enforce compliance with media rules.**

The Commission shall enforce compliance with rules that apply to media services. The Commission shall investigate alleged violations and take enforcement action, where appropriate.

### ***Factors Affecting the Achievement of This Goal:***

***Technological:*** Advances in technology create the potential for significant increases in media outlets available to the public. Integration of technology platforms makes the transition to digital television and radio technologically challenging and requires coordination among various industries.

***Economic:*** Ongoing changes in the methods of delivering news and entertainment programming may introduce economic uncertainty and thus, risk, into communications markets. Economic factors may spur consolidation within the media industries that could potentially affect competition, diversity and localism. In addition, the transition to digital delivery modes has required significant up-front financial investment from content providers, service outlets, and equipment suppliers prior to full roll-out of the technology and eventual recouping of investment.



*Legal:* Court decisions have affected the FCC's media ownership rules. Congress has mandated continued review of these rules, which may result in further court challenges. Similarly, Congress has mandated a transition to DTV that will require coordination with all aspects of the distribution system. Court challenges of FCC rules and policies to advance the DTV transition may also result. To accommodate the Commission's goals, existing bilateral agreements and treaties will need to be modified and new agreements will need to be negotiated with Canada and Mexico.

*Organizational:* Commission personnel must have access to current data on industry and forecasts of future economic trends in order to conduct rigorous and effective policy analysis. The digital transition requires continuing education of FCC technical staff to maintain an up-to-date understanding of developments in communications technology. Moreover, to the extent the number of consumer complaints against broadcast stations continues to grow, the FCC must have sufficient personnel (*e.g.*, attorneys and consumer advocacy and mediation specialists) and technological resources to efficiently process such complaints in a timely manner. The FCC will also need to maintain sufficient technical personnel (*e.g.*, engineers) to enforce compliance with technical and operational rules in a timely manner.



## **Goal: Public Safety and Homeland Security**

***Vision:** Communications during emergencies and crises must be available for public safety, health, defense, and emergency personnel, as well as all consumers in need. The Nation's critical communications infrastructure must be reliable, interoperable, redundant, and rapidly restorable.*

**Objective 1: The Commission shall develop policies that promote access to effective communications services in emergency situations by public safety, health, defense, and other emergency personnel, as well as all consumers in need.**

The Commission shall ensure that every segment of the U.S. communications industry, -- digital and analog, wired and wireless, terrestrial and satellite, IP and non-IP -- regardless of networks and technologies, does all it can to enhance public safety and homeland security. The Commission shall facilitate the deployment of 911 services and technologies to all appropriate communications networks and technologies. The Commission shall also take steps to ensure that all segments of the communications industry have the capability to provide effective and technologically up-to-date public alerts and warnings to the American public, including those provided through the Emergency Alert System (EAS). Through these efforts, the Commission shall ensure that all consumers, including consumers with disabilities, have access to emergency communications.

The Commission shall take actions necessary to eliminate interference to public safety radio transmissions that endangers public safety, health, defense, and emergency personnel and the public. The Commission shall also review with its industry and government partners ways to ensure that there is sufficient spectrum available for public safety communications, and shall consider whether commercial services and technologies may be used to more effectively address public safety communications needs. The Commission shall promote and facilitate participation in priority service programs, such as Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) and Wireless Priority Service (WPS), which provide national security and emergency preparedness users priority telecommunications services that are vital to coordinating and responding to crises. The Commission shall promote and facilitate participation in the EAS by the full range of communications providers. In addition, the Commission shall effectively enforce its interference, public safety, and EAS rules.

**Objective 2: The Commission shall evaluate and strengthen measures for protecting the Nation's critical communications infrastructure.**

The Commission shall provide strong leadership to industry and other governmental agencies in the protection of the Nation's critical communications infrastructure. The Commission must explore all available ways to work collaboratively with industry to increase network diversity and redundancy and maximize the availability, interoperability, and reliability of all communications. The Commission shall work with industry and government both at home and abroad to establish Best Practices that should be adopted by communications providers.

**Objective 3: The Commission's policies shall facilitate rapid restoration of the U.S. communications infrastructure and facilities after disruption by any cause.**

Protection of the Nation's critical communications infrastructure requires that the Commission adopt policies to ensure rapid restoration of communications after disruptions due to any cause. The

Commission shall work collaboratively with industry, other governmental agencies, and foreign counterparts to coordinate and engage in outreach to develop standards for Emergency Telecommunications Services (ETS); to increase awareness of the TSP and WPS programs; to stimulate participation in the TSP and WPS programs by 911 Centers, first responders, and federal, state, tribal, and local governmental agencies; to propose ways of making TSP and WPS participation more affordable; to identify obstacles to TSP and WPS participation; and to recommend changes to overcome such obstacles. The Commission shall also work collaboratively with the satellite industry and other governmental agencies to identify and ensure the availability of facilities for restoration of satellite and other services. In addition, the Commission shall explore all available ways to ensure that all emerging technologies, networks, and services are reliable, interoperable, redundant, and rapidly restorable.

***Objective 4: The Commission shall coordinate with industry and other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies on matters of public safety, homeland security, and disaster management.***

Over 90 percent of the Nation's communications infrastructure is privately owned. Cooperation and coordination among industry, public safety organizations, and federal, tribal, state, and local governments is therefore essential to the successful nationwide implementation of critical infrastructure protection, public safety communications interoperability, and effective public alert and warning systems. Accordingly, the Commission shall coordinate with private industry to develop policies that will further the vision, goals, and objectives of public safety, homeland security, and disaster management.

In order to support national security, emergency preparedness, infrastructure protection, and interoperability in public safety communications in the communications sector, the Commission shall work collaboratively and coordinate on outreach with other federal agencies, such as the Department of Homeland Security, NTIA, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and with state, tribal, local and foreign governments to implement proper and effective spectrum management, develop rules and policies aimed at promoting and improving nationwide interoperability for public safety communications, and to continue to develop a technologically up-to-date EAS. Coordination shall include outreach, particularly to the public safety community, and participating in intergovernmental and industry committees, task forces, and bilateral and international venues. The Commission should work with these groups as partners and strive to communicate with affected industry and governmental groups in advance of proposed public safety, homeland security, and disaster management policy initiatives to solicit input at the early stages of the decision making process. The Commission shall continue to coordinate with the Executive Branch on transactions that involve foreign investment in the U.S. licensees.

***Objective 5: The Commission must act swiftly in matters affecting public safety, homeland security, and disaster management.***

The Commission shall always strive to be responsive to all issues, disputes, appeals, and other matters brought to the attention of the Commission. In matters regarding public safety, homeland security, and disaster management, the Commission shall strive to act swiftly and responsively. The Commission shall act expeditiously to respond to the public safety and homeland security issues raised by first responders, governments, communications providers, and consumers. In the event of crises or disasters, the Commission shall closely coordinate with industry and other governmental agencies to ensure that communications for governmental agencies, first responders, industry, consumers, and the disabled community are maintained at the appropriate level and that restoration efforts commence immediately.

***Objective 6: The Commission shall participate in international organizations and conferences to coordinate protection of the global communications infrastructure.***

The communications networks of the United States are part of a larger interconnected global communications infrastructure. The Commission shall work with other U.S. agencies and private industry in bilateral and multilateral venues to share information about U.S. preparedness with foreign government and private sector participants.

***Additional Means and Strategies:***

Appropriate Commission personnel shall gain technical knowledge of public safety, homeland security, and disaster management issues, including the impact of various spectrum uses on interference, of new or evolving technologies, and of existing and proposed best practices for communications providers. Commission staff shall continually review the Commission's rules to determine what rules need to be implemented, revised, or eliminated to provide effectively and efficiently for public safety and homeland security matters.

***Factors Affecting the Achievement of This Goal:***

*Technological:* The U.S. economy and society is increasingly dependent on globally interconnected communications technologies. Today's interconnected communications technologies are subject to an increasing number of threats – natural, man-made, physical and cyber. In addition, the face of communications is changing as new technologies and services are rapidly developed and deployed. The challenge is to craft public safety and homeland security rules sufficiently flexible to ensure that evolving technologies and services develop in a manner consistent with the public's safety, and that those rules do not hinder technological innovation or impede the market forces that allow innovative services to thrive.

Networks are interconnected globally, and in the case of satellite networks, may operate outside the territorial reach of any nation. As a result, networks must be protected from actions initiated outside the United States. Ensuring the reliability and the safety of our critical systems and networks from such actions requires a system of international cooperation to facilitate information sharing, reduce vulnerabilities, deter malicious actors, protect information security, and promote a global culture of security.

*Economic:* The globally interconnected nature of many of today's communications technologies is a significant contributing factor to the growth of the U.S. economy, but that interconnection also exposes the network to a wider variety of threats. The current economic climate may make it difficult for communications infrastructure providers to commit large sums of money to the wholesale improvement of network protection and redundancy. Again, a challenge is how to provide for homeland security and public safety without stifling innovation or rendering it uneconomical.

*Legal:* Legislation, ongoing proceedings, and shared oversight and responsibility for spectrum by federal agencies may affect the spectrum efficiency standards applicable to public safety and homeland security entities as well as the availability of spectrum for services that play a role in homeland security and public safety. A lack of legal means for protecting information on vulnerabilities from public disclosure via FOIA may discourage service providers from complete candor in discussions with the Commission.

*Organizational:* The Commission must continually update its knowledge to fully understand national and international implications of the threats to communications technologies that arise under public safety,

homeland security, and disaster management scenarios. This requires substantial human expertise and resources. Accordingly, the Commission must maintain an experienced, educated, and knowledgeable technical and legal staff that is able to stay abreast of technological and policy developments and trends. The Commission must maintain ongoing, highly integrated relationships with the communications industries; other federal regulators; and state, tribal, and local regulators who are heavily involved in the use of spectrum as it relates to public safety. With respect to satellite services, the FCC must continually update its knowledge and maintain ongoing relationships with the satellite industry and other government agencies concerning specialized technical issues that might impact the availability or reliability of space-based services.

## **Goal: Modernize the FCC**

***Vision:** The FCC shall strive to be a highly productive, adaptive, and innovative organization that maximizes the benefit to stakeholders, staff, and management from effective systems, processes, resources, and organizational culture.*

**Objective 1: The Commission shall structure the FCC so that it can flexibly respond to Congress, consumers, and the communications industry in a timely manner.**

The Commission's regulations touch industries at the vanguard of technological development – media, telecommunications, and information services. To carry out its mission effectively, the Commission must ensure that its processes, procedures, and systems are integrated, reliable, and user-friendly. The Commission must also communicate clearly, openly, and interactively with the public, Congress, the Administration, other government agencies, and the media about trends in and impacts of various communication technologies so these groups might actively participate in the Commission's decision-making process. The Commission shall maximize the use of modern, user-friendly information technologies as part of these communications.

**Objective2: The Commission shall offer employees educational and advancement opportunities.**

The Commission shall provide and sustain mission-critical training and development in order to ensure excellence among a diverse and expert staff. The Commission recognizes the importance of our employees' quality of work life on and off the job and shall work to address the diverse range of needs. The Commission shall also seek the resources and appropriate tools to ensure its staff is physically protected, maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

### ***Additional Means and Strategies:***

The Commission shall develop and implement processes to recognize and reward effective, results-oriented management. It shall also identify ways to leverage and integrate technology in order to eliminate unnecessary redundancy, and improve stakeholder satisfaction. The Commission shall continue to hire or redeploy, train, equip, and retain a diverse and expert staff essential to the FCC's critical functions.

Additionally, the Commission shall establish and operate internal and external information gathering and sharing programs that anticipate and respond to the evolving nature of the communications marketplace.

### ***Factors Affecting the Achievement of This Goal:***

***Technological:*** Organizational and informational technologies change rapidly in today's world. This requires organizations to put processes in place that provide for timely introduction, upgrade, or replacement of technologies. The Commission must put forward a long-term vision for the strategic use of technology, while appropriately balancing the flexible introduction of performance-enhancing technologies with transparent and accountable management of all resources. Ensuring that the Commission has access to the human resources necessary to properly plan, implement, and evaluate the use of these technologies is a complementary factor affecting the achievement of the Commission's

organizational excellence goal.

*Economic:* The Commission has many opportunities to improve stakeholder and employee satisfaction and effective mission accomplishment through the introduction of new or the integration of existing systems and processes.

*Legal:* As communications technologies rapidly develop and are introduced into the marketplace, changes to legislation may affect satisfaction of this goal.

*Organizational:* Carrying out the mission of the FCC requires highly trained, expert staff capable of assessing and understanding technological and industry trends and enforcing technical requirements with up-to-date technological tools. Recruiting, hiring, redeploying, training, motivating, and retaining such a staff is a challenge that the Commission is working hard to meet. By continuing to develop and enhance an organizational culture that embraces communication, accountability, and learning, the Commission shall be able to plan and carry out effective change management programs that will lead to full achievement of its goal of modernizing the FCC.

## **Performance Goals for Each of the Strategic Goals**

For its six strategic goals, the FCC has established twenty performance goals:

### **Broadband:**

- Broaden the deployment of broadband technologies.
- Define broadband to include any platform capable of transmitting high-bandwidth intensive services, applications, and content.
- Ensure harmonized regulatory treatment of competing broadband services.
- Encourage and facilitate an environment that stimulates investment and innovation in broadband technologies and services.

### **Competition:**

- Promote access to telecommunications services for all Americans.
- Ensure that American consumers can choose among multiple reliable and affordable communications services.
- Promote pro-competitive and universal access policies worldwide.
- Work to inform American consumers about their rights and responsibilities in the competitive communications marketplace.
- Enforce the Commission's rules for the benefit of consumers.

### **Spectrum:**

- Ensure that the Nation's spectrum is used efficiently and effectively.
- Advocate U.S. spectrum interests in the international arena.
- Enforce the Commission's spectrum regulations and policies.

### **Media:**

- Develop media rules and policies that achieve statutory policy objectives in light of significant changes to traditional media services.
- Enforce compliance with media rules.

**Public Safety and Homeland Security:**

- Promote the reliability, security, rapid restoration, and survivability of the communications infrastructure.
- Facilitate deployment of public safety technology.
- Establish and maintain a clearinghouse of information for the public safety community.

**Modernize the FCC**

- Become an easier organization to do business with by integrating systems, processes, and interfaces.
- Create and sustain an organizational culture that encourages innovation, accountability, and continual improvement.
- Ensure effective communications with consumers, Congress, the communications industry, and fellow federal, state, tribal, and local agencies.



## Evaluation Plans

The FCC is dedicated to ensuring that both the mission and resources entrusted to it are properly and effectively managed. The performance of the FCC is evaluated in several ways. The Commission issues an annual Performance and Accountability Report which contains financial and program performance information. For fiscal years 2006 and 2007, the FCC received an unqualified financial audit opinion with no material weaknesses affecting its financial operations. The Commission will continue to strive for high quality financial and performance management as part of its dedication to the proper stewardship of resources.

The Commission's programs have also been evaluated through the Program Assessment and Rating Tool (PART). The FCC has improved or is in the process of improving its Universal Service Fund programs (Schools and Libraries/E-Rate, High Cost, Low Income and Rural Healthcare), and the Telecommunications Relay Service program through lessons learned in the PART evaluation process. The Commission and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) also completed a PART evaluation of its program "Auctions of Licenses for Electromagnetic Spectrum" in 2006. In 2008, the FCC and OMB completed a PART evaluation of its overall regulatory program, titled "Federal Communications Commission – Salaries and Expenses." Details on these evaluations can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/>

## Public Comments

In a public notice (DA 08-1472) released June 24, 2008, the FCC announced that members of the public were invited to review a draft of the Strategic Plan for 2009-2014 and provide comments by July 24, 2008. The Commission received four public comments which were reviewed and considered. We incorporated comments where they helped to clarify explanatory portions of the Plan. Those who are concerned with the broad and general nature of the Strategic Plan are encouraged to review the Commission's Performance and Accountability Reports and the FCC Performance Plans located within the agency's budget estimates to Congress to obtain more specific details. These documents are located on the Commission's web site at <http://www.fcc.gov/omd/strategicplan/>. As the Federal government approaches a change in presidential administrations in 2009, and faces new priorities stemming from legal and technological change, we invite all interested members of the public to visit the FCC home page at <http://www.fcc.gov/> for information on the Commission's initiatives to meet the challenges of the dynamic telecommunications environment.